

# In Partnership



The Open  
University

Open University International Partnerships

Open University Worldwide

Newsletter for International Partners

November 2009

## Global business leader becomes OU's new Vice-Chancellor

The Open University's fifth Vice-Chancellor took office in October, following Professor Gourley's retirement. Martin Bean joins the OU from the private sector, bringing with him over 20 years experience in training and education. He has held senior executive positions in North America, Asia Pacific and Europe.

Martin Bean said: "The Open University is a truly unique organisation that has harnessed the power of technology and transformed the way people access high quality educational opportunities. Its mission and approach are more relevant today to the needs of society and the potential offered by technology than ever."

"There is a growing gap between an increasingly knowledge-driven economy and the numbers of people with the skills to succeed. In these economically challenging times, traditional routes to education cannot offer a dramatic increase in scale to allow for wider access. Supported open learning, which can be delivered by all kinds of media platforms, is part of the solution in both the developed economies and the developing world. The potential is enormously exciting."

"I am delighted to be part of the next generation of The Open University and look forward to the journey ahead."

Martin Bean was General Manager within the Education Products Group at the Microsoft Corporation in Redmond, Washington and is a recognised industry leader around the world. He has held executive management roles in leading organisations, including Novell Inc., Sylvan Learning Systems and Thomson Learning.

Martin Bean has been actively involved in the advancement of education policy and the reform of education to meet today's growing need for more relevant, high-quality provision and innovative research. He was appointed to the UK government's new online distance learning task force announced by Higher Education Minister David Lammy in June. The task force will advise on a wider strategy to help UK universities build on their existing world class reputations.

He has established and managed complex, multi-stakeholder partnerships in public, private and not-for-profit organisations and has a track record of growing or reinventing complex enterprises. He has presented to the U.S. Senate on the importance of ICT in the Workforce Investment Act and testified



Pictured: Vice-Chancellor Martin Bean

on behalf of the Workforce Coalition before the Subcommittee on Oversight of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Prior to moving to the UK, Martin Bean was a member of the National Board of Directors of Jobs for Americas Graduates and was a member of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee for the Computing Technology Industry Association, chairing its Public Policy Committee. He was President of AIESEC International, (Association Internationale des Étudiants en Sciences Économiques et Commerciales) the international, not-for-profit organisation run by students and recent graduates.

For more information on working with Open University Worldwide, visit [www.ouworldwide.com](http://www.ouworldwide.com)



## The Open University tops UK student satisfaction survey



The Open University is once again at the top of the UK's National Student Survey for student satisfaction (excluding specialist universities).

94% of students said they were satisfied overall with the quality of their course, according to the latest National Student Survey published in August. Since the survey began in 2005, The Open University has been at the top of the rankings for four years out of five.

Over 9,000 OU students participated in the survey and a total of 155 higher education institutions (HEIs) across the UK and 117 further education colleges (FECs) in England took part.

Former Vice-Chancellor Professor Brenda Gourley said: "I am delighted that our students continue to rate their experience here so highly. The Open University has been a top performer since the survey began, and that is a reflection of the importance we accord to student support and feedback."

## 10th anniversary of national distance education in China

The Ministry of Education celebrated 10 years of the Chinese government's commitment to distance education in China during November. A three day conference and exhibition to celebrate the 10th anniversary was attended by 67 Distance Education Schools, approved by the Ministry of Education to provide distance learning.

The conference showcased the achievements of distance education, including papers/reports on teaching models, quality assurance, the use of technology in teaching etc.

Professor Steve Swithenby and Dr Mark Endean (Senior Lecturer) represented The Open University at the conference. OU Worldwide's Director of International Development Vicky Amos, Partnerships Manager Sarah McGowan and Project Manager for International Partnerships Sandra Rowden also attended.

In addition to hosting a stand explaining the work of The Open University, the



Pictured: Senior members of Peking University and The Open University, and Madame Liu of the Chinese Ministry of Education.

OU organised a research workshop on student support, exploring the issues surrounding supporting students learning at a distance.

Attendees at the workshop included representatives of The Open University of China (formerly CCRTVU), Peking University and Telemedical School, the University of International Business and Economics and many more.

By invitation only, the workshop is intended to be the first of many. A core group of academics will explore the parameters around quality distance education whilst sharing knowledge and expertise in the area. It is hoped that other respected Chinese academics will participate in these workshops from time to time.



### The Open University of China launches new courses



Pictured: The launch ceremony for OUC's new courses

In addition to the 10th anniversary conference reported on page two, The Open University of China (formerly China Central Radio and Television University, or CCRTVU) hosted an International Summit of Open and Distance Education in Beijing during October. The conference not only marked The Open University of China's (OUC) 30th anniversary, but also saw the launch of three online courses, provided in collaboration with The Open University.

Denise Kirkpatrick, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Learning, Teaching

and Quality at The Open University, gave a keynote speech in which she explored the increasing demand for education during the economic downturn. "Universities play a critical role in supporting the professional development of practitioners in all spheres to achieve development goals. Open, distance and flexible learning are a proven means to provide higher education for all, to develop the skills of practitioners in their work place and to provide rapid educational interventions on a large scale."

"Without a doubt the current financial crisis has had a negative impact on the lives of millions throughout the world and is likely to continue to do so. However, many have also used this as an opportunity to turn their lives around. Open and distance learning provides the opportunity for many to retrain and re-skill either while remaining in some form of employment or in a manner that is more affordable, accessible and convenient."

The three online courses, written by The Open University and translated and tutored by OUC, are aimed at teachers and practitioners of distance learning. The courses, which consist of 20 hours of learning each, focus on Student Support, Course Design and Teaching Online.

The Open University and OUC have been working in partnership since 2000. OUC license course materials from two courses called This is English and World Class English for Business, and two visiting scholars from OUC are currently based in The Open University's Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs).

### OMI award ceremonies for students across two countries

Open Management International (OMI) held their award ceremonies during September and October 2009 for students of the Certificate and Diploma in Business Studies.

44 students across Bratislava, Prague and Kosice received their awards, presented by Miroslav Kucka, the owner of OMI, and Alex Wright, Lecturer in Strategic Manager with The Open University Business School.

Dr Vladimir Bulla, Board Member for T-Systems in Slovakia, spoke at the Kosice ceremony in support of the Certificate and Diploma in Management awards and emphasised the need for the Slovak workforce to undertake additional education. Also at Kosice, OMI presented a distinguished student award to Zlatica Prochazkova, for her outstanding performance while studying the Diploma.

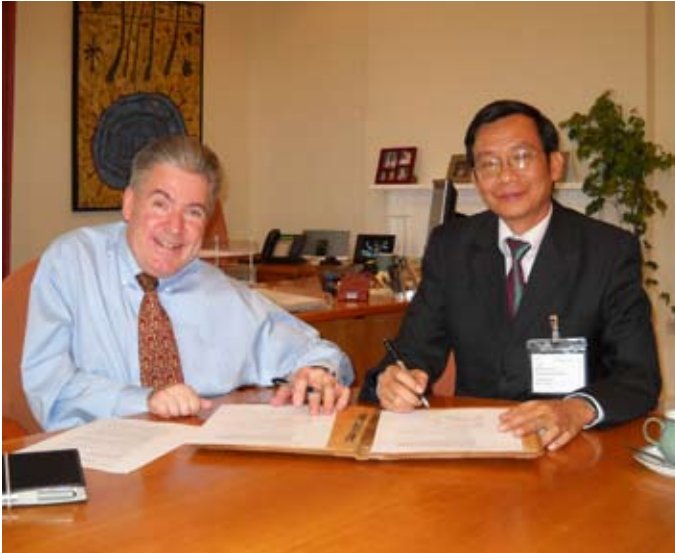


Pictured: OMI award ceremony in Bratislava

As part of the Prague and Bratislava ceremonies, Alex Wright of The Open University Business School delivered a seminar entitled "Rethinking strategy: Why it is something people do and not what organizations have".



## Hoa Sen University and The Open University to collaborate



Pictured: Vice Chancellor Martin Bean of The Open University and Vice President Mr Do Sy Cuong of Hoa Sen University.

Hoa Sen University of Vietnam and The Open University signed a Memorandum of Understanding in November 2009 to further the collaboration between the two universities.

Vice President Mr Do Sy Cuong and Assistant to the President, Mr Vo Minh Thai, visited The Open University to sign the memorandum and also explored The Open University's online library services, continuing professional development courses, curriculum development and regional support services.

The aim of the Memorandum of Understanding is to build a mutually beneficial relationship, exploring ways in which OU content could enhance Hoa Sen's offering to students. The partnership also hopes to develop joint initiatives to target funding from third party funders, focussing initially on Microsoft funding in relation to providing education for the victims of Agent Orange.

Hoa Sen University is a private educator based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Established in 1991 as Lotus College, Hoa Sen University was awarded full university status in 2006. The university currently has 390 academic staff across four faculties; Science and Technology; Economics and Business; Languages and Culture Studies; and Polytechnics.

Hoa Sen University is interested in using course content from several Open University course materials that form part of the MSc in Information Systems/Technology Management. Hoa Sen University aims to offer its first postgraduate qualifications from October 2010, which Open University course content will assist with. Funding from the UK Prime Minister's Initiative 2 (PMI2) will support costs for The Open University.

The OU has made several recent visits to Hoa Sen University. Pro-Vice-Chancellor Denise Kirkpatrick visited in August to meet with senior staff, and Keith Williams, Senior Lecturer with the Maths, Computing and Technology faculty, visited in October to build relationships and develop the licensing partnership. In addition, Lindsey Court and Brian Hambling ran an MSc workshop for university staff, funded by PMI2.

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## Collaboration to support environmental research in Delhi

Representatives from The Open University's Earth Sciences department visited the University of Delhi in September to discuss issues of common interest related to environmental science.

Dr Nick Rogers and Dr Mahesh Anand met with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research at the University of Delhi and some of Delhi's leading scientists, including Prof. M. Pandit, Head of the School of Environmental Sciences, and Prof V. Rajamani, from the Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Building on a Memorandum of Understanding between The Open University and the University of Delhi, the OU was invited to explore developing collaborative programmes in Environmental Studies related to the impact of climate change on the environmental system of Northern India.

Delhi has a population of over 30 million people, and continues to grow in step with the recent rapid expansion of the Indian economy. This demographic change has created significant stress on the natural resources available in the

region, such as water, food, land and housing. In addition, the rapid pace of industrialization and urbanization has created pollution problems affecting water, air and soil quality, impacting on the daily life of the local population.

It is hoped this visit will enable scientific exchanges and research projects between the OU and University of Delhi. Environmental science is an emerging field in India, and it is hoped the collaboration will build capacity in this area by bringing together expertise across disciplines.



### New cohort begin computing studies in Botswana



Pictured: Ananth Ram, Director for Education & Quality Assurance, and Professor Hugh Robinson outside the NIIT campus in Gaborone.

A cohort of 874 students started the BSc (Hons) Computing and its Practice Top Up Degree in Botswana in August.

Professor Hugh Robinson visited both of NIIT's centres in Botswana (Gaborone and Francistown) in early August to meet with students, tutors and management staff. Representatives of OU Worldwide and the Maths, Computing and Technology Faculty visited the Gaborone centre in October to discuss operational and academic issues and to finalise the Operations Handbook. NIIT visited the OU in November for academic and operational meetings and to attend an award board.

### New MBA graduates celebrate in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Minister of Education Ato Demeke Mekonnen was the guest of honour at a graduation ceremony for 32 MBA graduates in August.

The new graduates join a group of 250 MBA alumni in Ethiopia, which includes government ministers, military leaders, senior civil servants and staff from a range of commercial organisations.

Joining the Ethiopian Minister of Education in congratulating the new graduates were Carmel McMahon, representing The Open University Business School, Barbara Wickham, the Director of the British Council, and the Dean of Addis Ababa University College of Commerce, which is one of The Open University's partners for the MBA programme in Ethiopia. Several other invited local officials were also present at the ceremony, as well as two Open University Business School tutors, Jack Neasham and Kris de Clercq.

The most recent cohort of 52 students started their MBA studies in May 2009. The Open University has been offering the Masters in Business Administration programme in Ethiopia since 1991, when Meles Zenawi and his government ministers began their successful studies.

## Working in partnership with Open University Worldwide

There are many ways to work in partnership with The Open University, depending on your needs and circumstances.

#### Offer an OU degree

Students are registered with the OU, which provides tutor training, student assessment, examination and awards. Partners manage student communication and guidance and distribute course materials.

#### Offer your own degree

Licence OU course materials for flexible use in your own course. Partners can select the most useful course units, adapt or translate material, and access print, audio-visual and online resources.

#### Consultancy

Expert advice on how to run workshops, write course material and establish distance learning organisations. Areas of guidance include quality assurance, strategy and management, learning support, teacher education and computing.



Pictured: The Robert Hooke Building on The Open University campus, UK, home to the Science Faculty, the Planetary and Space Science Research Institute and the Department of Chemistry and Analytical Sciences.

For more information on any aspect of working with The Open University, please contact your partnership representative, visit [www.ouworldwide.com](http://www.ouworldwide.com) or call +44 (0)1908 858785.